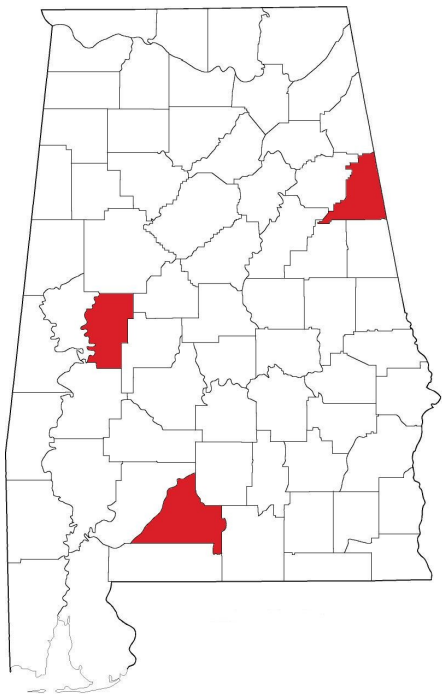
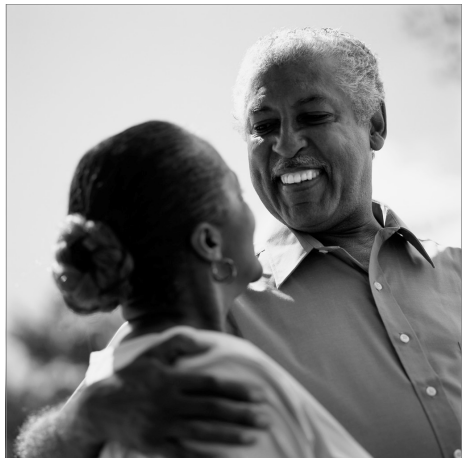


What if YOU knew that EVERYONE in Conecuh, Cleburne, and Hale Counties was going to have a life-threatening medical emergency this year...<sup>15</sup>



leaving over 2,700 Alabamians dead<sup>2</sup> and thousands more seriously disabled.

**WOULD YOU TRY TO DO SOMETHING TO HELP?**



**EVERY YEAR, there are about 46,000 reported cases of stroke in Alabama,<sup>3</sup> and over 2,700 Alabamians lose their lives battling a stroke.<sup>2</sup>**

## WHY SHOULD ALABAMA LEGISLATORS BE CONCERNED?

**In Alabama, the stroke death rate is 1.3 times the national average, and the state ranks second in stroke mortality in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Over 2,700 Alabamians die from stroke each year.<sup>2</sup>**

**Stroke drains the economy.** In Alabama, there are about 46,000 reported cases of stroke each year, with an annual price tag of \$260 million in medical expenses and \$420 million in lost productivity.<sup>3</sup>

**Stroke care is insufficient and fragmented in Alabama.** Without adequate treatment — within three hours of the first symptoms, stroke victims can suffer severe neurological damage or death.<sup>4</sup>

**Awareness of stroke warning signs and the need for urgent care is dangerously low.** Only 17% of Alabamians are aware of all the correct symptoms of a stroke and the need to call 911.<sup>5</sup>

**Many Alabamians have a ticking time bomb—inside them.** Two of the most common causes of stroke are high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Smoking doubles the risk for stroke.<sup>6,7</sup> 33% of Alabamians have high blood pressure, over 39% have high cholesterol, and 22.5% smoke.<sup>8</sup>

## WHAT CAN ALABAMA LEGISLATORS DO?

**Advocate for a stroke system of care.** Coordinated stroke response and care gives stroke victims in Alabama access to the most effective treatment.<sup>9</sup>

**Support efforts to fund certified primary stroke centers.** Stroke centers are medical facilities staffed by health care professionals with specific training in rapidly diagnosing and treating strokes.<sup>10</sup> There are only two certified primary stroke centers in Alabama (Decatur and Huntsville).<sup>11</sup>

**Promote stroke awareness campaigns.** Awareness of stroke warning signs and the need to call 911 saves lives and reduces disability.<sup>12</sup>

**Make healthy choices easier.** Support policies and programs that will help Alabamians make life-style and behavior changes to reduce their risk for stroke. 80% of strokes can be prevented.<sup>13</sup>

**Extend insurance coverage.** Support policies that include health care coverage for chronic disease prevention, such as tobacco cessation and blood pressure and cholesterol screening, treatment and control.

**Support policies focused on Alabamians at high risk for stroke.** Implement programs focused on high-risk groups such as African-Americans, Hispanics, uninsured, low-income Alabamians, and the elderly.<sup>14</sup>

## WHAT IS A STROKE?

**A stroke happens when the blood supply to the brain is cut off or when a blood vessel bursts. Without oxygen, brain cells begin to die and death or permanent disability can result.**

### The five warning signs of stroke are:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg , especially on one side of the body;
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding;
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes;
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination;
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

**Stroke is an emergency.  
Call 911**

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